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Editor
J. Richard Greenwell

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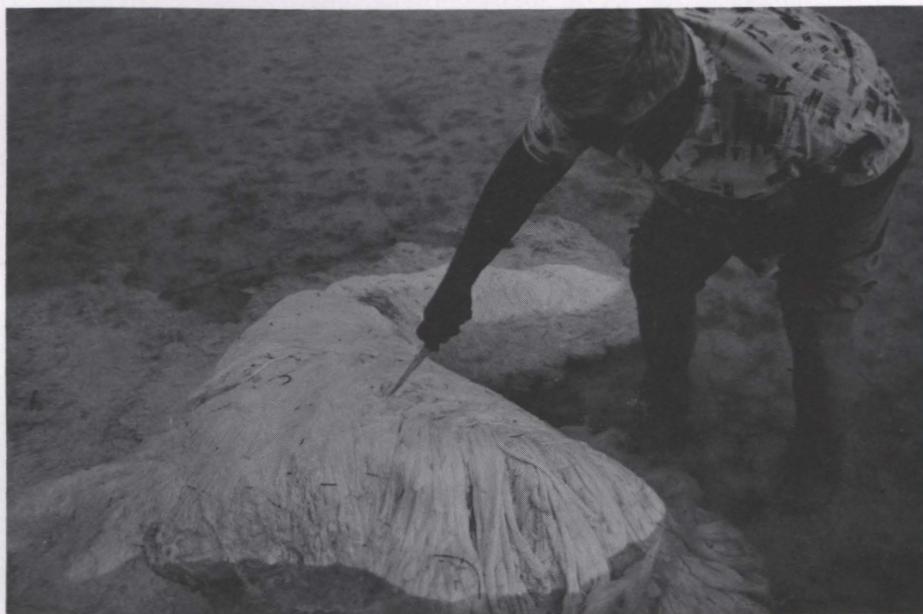
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BERMUDA BLOB REMAINS UNIDENTIFIED



The Bermuda Blob being probed by Teddy Tucker. So far, no zoologist has been able to identify it as the remains of a marine mammal or shark, or any other kind of marine vertebrate. Investigators hope that the Blob may be the remains of the much-discussed giant octopus.

A large mass of organic material--the proverbial blob--has washed up on a Bermuda beach, and the identity of the animal involved has so far baffled zoologists.

The incident occurred in May, 1988, when the Blob was found by local resident Teddy Tucker in the shallow waters of his beach in Mangrove Bay. Mr. Tucker, an expert deep sea and shallows fisherman and wreck diver, informed The Royal Gazette, the local newspaper, that the Blob was not the remains of a whale, but, rather, "part of a deep water creature that was very large" and "very rubbery."

Unable to identify it himself, he wrote to a close friend, University of Maryland marine biologist Eugenie Clark, an internationally recognized expert on sharks. Dr. Clark, who serves on the Society's Board of Directors, wrote to the ISC Secretariat urging an investiga-

tion and stating that the carcass was definitely not that of a shark. Mr. Tucker then provided the Secretariat with good color photos of the Blob, copies of which have been shown to many marine biologists--so far with negative results.

The Blob was about 8 feet in length. Fortunately -- a rare event in cryptozoology -- Mr. Tucker preserved a chunk of it in formalin prior to it being washed out to sea again.

Mr. Tucker gained fame many years ago when he found a large emerald cross while wreck diving. It was the most valuable piece of underwater treasure ever recovered at that time, and it was on exhibit in the Maritime Museum in Bermuda for a number of years. One day, when it was to be shown to the Queen, he discovered that the original had been stolen and replaced by a replica! This replica continues to be on exhibit.

In his communications to the Secretariat, Mr. Tucker described the Blob as having no bones or cartilage, being "very dense and solid," having no odor, and no visible openings. He had cut into it with some difficulty, and described it as "like trying to cut a car tire."

Initially, Dr. Clark showed the photos to various whale experts, with no results. She also showed them to specialists in the high-polymer lab on her campus. They stated that it definitely did not look like a synthesized product.

ISC Secretary Richard Greenwell then sent copies of the photos to three members for opinions: Roy Mackal, a biochemist at the University of Chicago, Clyde Roper, a cephalopod expert at the Smithsonian Institution, and Forrest Wood, a marine mammalogist with the U.S. Navy in San Diego. Dr. Roper also shared the photos with ISC member James Mead, a marine mammalogist at the Smithsonian.

None of these individuals was able to identify what kind of animal the Blob came from. Nor

have any of their colleagues who have examined the photos. Dr. Mead, furthermore, stated that if there was no associated odor, the Blob could not have come from a whale.

Of great interest to the principals, however, is the possibility that the Blob may be the remains of a giant octopus, and perhaps similar to the St. Augustine, Florida, carcass of 1896. In that case, a large mass was originally described as a giant octopus by Yale cephalopod expert A.E. Verrill, who subsequently changed his identification to a giant squid -- without actually examining the specimen (see Autumn, 1985, Newsletter).

A part of the specimen remained at the Smithsonian for decades, to be "rediscovered" by Forrest Wood in the 1950's. Subsequent microscopic analysis by cell biologist Joseph Gennaro, now at New York University, and more recent amino acid analysis by Roy Mackal (see his Research Report in Cryptozoology, Vol. 5, 1986), support the giant octopus hypothesis. Definite proof, however, remains

lacking, and most marine biologists, if they have heard of the case at all, remain unconvinced. Roper and Mead likewise are skeptical of the octopus origins of the St. Augustine carcass, although they accept the likelihood of giant octopuses out there somewhere.

How giant would a giant octopus be? The largest known octopus species spans about 20-25 feet from tentacle tip to tentacle tip. Wood believes that a radial spread of 50 to 100 feet would be a reasonable size, putting it in the same range as the length of the largest giant squids found so far. Mackal and Gennaro, however, believe that a radial spread of 100 to 200 feet is possible, based partly on the size of the Florida carcass and subsequent eyewitness accounts. Certainly, there are no known physiological reasons to prevent the growth of a cephalopod to that size in a liquid medium.

Could the Bermuda Blob be another giant octopus stranding after a wait of nearly a century (or the first known giant octopus stranding if the Florida one was indeed something else)? The location may be a good one. Although the Caribbean has been considered the best area to look for giant octopuses (and Wood, who once collected native reports there, thinks that the Tongue of the Ocean, a deep trench east of Andros Island, is a likely spot), Bermuda has recently been looked at more closely.

Located about 650 miles east of the U.S. mainland, this British island in the Atlantic was the scene of strange underwater happenings in 1984. Deep sea fisherman Sean Ingram described how some large animal kept holding down his crab and prawn traps which had been lowered to a depth of 2,000 fathoms. Several traps were bent and mutilated, and two were lost completely. (See Newsletter, Autumn, 1985.)



A closer look at the Blob, described by Tucker as "very rubbery." Cutting into it, he said, was "like trying to cut a car tire."

While some have dismissed Ingram's claims, nobody has produced a viable alternative to the hypothesis of a bottom-dwelling giant octopus holding the traps down while trying to take advantage of a fishing operation.

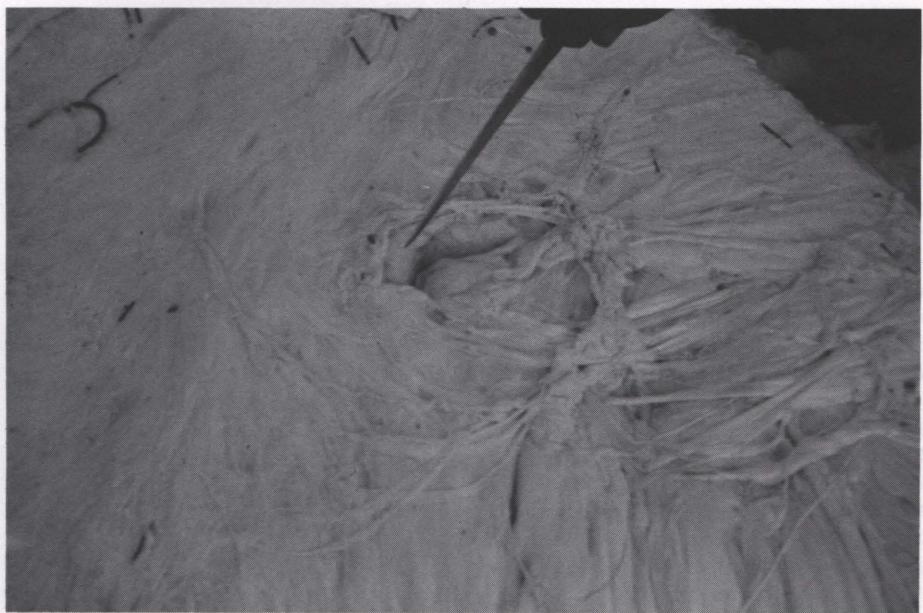
With no experts being able to identify the new Bermuda Blob so far, more thought has been given to the next stage of the investigation. Greenwell had proposed to all parties that the organic sample that Tucker had kept in formalin--or a part of it--be donated to the Smithsonian Institution's National Museum of Natural History so that it is directly available to Smithsonian scientists, as well as to others who might be interested in analyzing the material.

Various kinds of biochemical analyses could ultimately identify what kind of animal the Blob was. Jerold Lowenstein at the University of California Medical Center in San Francisco, for example, has agreed to conduct immunological response analysis (radioimmunoassay), to compare the results to others obtained on octopus, squid, whale blubber, etc.

The suggestion was seconded by all, including Dr. Roper, Curator of Mollusks at the National Museum, who stated that the Department of Invertebrate Zoology would be pleased to be the depository for a sample of the Blob.

In fact, on September 2, 1988, Dr. Roper wrote to Teddy Tucker informing him that the Cephalopod International Advisory Council had recently decided to make the Smithsonian the center for the receipt of specimens and information resulting from giant squid and octopus strandings. Thus, the proposal meshes perfectly with the Smithsonian's new role in the world of cephalopods.

Getting the specimen from



Note "stringiness" in close-up of Blob. Tucker preserved a sample in formalin, which should establish what sort of animal it came from.

Bermuda to Washington is not proving as easy as it may sound, however. A first shipment never arrived, and Mr. Tucker is now preparing a second shipment, and may even hand-deliver the specimen.

The question now is: is the description given by Teddy Tucker, and what is visible in the clear color photos, consistent with what one would expect from a giant octopus? Dr. Roper admits that the photos "are reminiscent of the old [1896 St. Augustine] photos," although he personally has doubts about the octopus origins of that carcass.

Mackal is more optimistic. In particular, he is curious about the toughness of the material, and the difficulty Tucker had in cutting into it. The material could well be collagen, he thinks, which is a tough protein substance forming the strong fibers which are present in the connective tissues of cephalopods. As invertebrates exerting great biomechanical strength, cephalopods depend greatly on collagen. Of interest, too, is the fact that, according to his amino acid analysis published in *Cryptozoology*, the material from

St. Augustine was mainly collagen.

Meanwhile, a new twist to the story has developed. In repeatedly examining the Bermuda Blob photos, Greenwell found something familiar about them, and he eventually remembered where he had seen photos of similar beached carcasses: in the early 1960's, a large organic mass had washed up on Tasmania, an island province of Australia, and a similar, later stranding had occurred in New Zealand. What struck him in particular was the "stringiness" of the Bermuda Blob, which was also evident in the Tasmanian and New Zealand carcasses.

Searching his files, Greenwell located 26-year-old newspaper clippings on the strandings, as well as an undated article by Bruce Mollison, the zoologist who first examined the Tasmanian carcass and was unable to identify it. Finding that naturalist Ivan T. Sanderson had also written about the case in two popular magazines, *Saga and Fate*, he contacted the Society for the Investigation of the Unexplained (SITU), a group founded by Sanderson.

Greenwell hoped that Sander-
son, who died in 1973, may have
had original photos of what he
had dubbed the "Globster," or at
least additional information,
which might still be found in
old SITU files. The current
president of SITU, Robert Warth,
did a search and uncovered some
clippings with clearer photo-
graphs, which he sent to Green-
well, but no new substantial
information or original photos
were located.

The case of the Tasmanian
Globster began in August, 1960,
when landowner Ben Fenton and
two of his "drovers" (stockmen),
Jack Boote and Ray Anthony,
were rounding up cattle near the
Interview River south of Sandy
Cape, a desolate area of western
Tasmania. They found the Glob-
ster on a beach, and described
it as measuring 20 by 18 feet,
and weighing between 5 and 10
tons.

Over a period of a year and a
half, they told a number of
people about the find, but no-
body seemed particularly inter-
ested. As time passed, they
would find that the carcass had
gradually drifted northward with
the tide, and usually remained
half-buried in the sand. Fenton
later described it as having
"no smell, no sign of decomposi-
tion, and the skin was as hard
as ever."



From left, G. C. Cramp, cameraman, Bruce Mollison, and Max Bennett. No clear, printable photo of Tasmanian Globster is yet available.

News finally reached Hobart,
the provincial capital, and G.C.
Cramp, a local businessman and
naturalist, decided to mount an
expedition to examine the car-
cass. After discussions with the
Tasmanian Museum, he financed an
aerial search for the carcass,
and, after it was located, a
party was put together consist-
ing of Bruce Mollison, a zoolo-
gist with the Commonwealth
Scientific and Industrial Re-
search Organization (CSIRO), Max
Bennett, also of CSIRO, and L.E.
Wall and J.A. Lewis, vice pres-
ident and treasurer respectively
of the Tasmanian Field Natural-
ists Club.

The team, lead by Mollison,
departed on March 2, 1962, and
had to hike through difficult
terrain, but they eventually
made it to the beached Globster.
By March 7, the team contacted
Cramp by telephone, informing
him that they were quite unable
to identify the animal involved.

The carcass, or what was left
of it, had no visible eyes, no
defined head, and no apparent
bone structure. The exterior
skin was described as "creamy"
and "rubbery." The carcass was
also described as "hairy." Mollison
was reported as having
stated: "One tends always to
reject the fact that an animal
is unknown. One is always seek-
ing some explanation, and you
try to add up everything, but
this does not add up yet....
There are only two possibilities
--that the animal is unknown, or
that it is the remnant of a
known animal."

For the next 10 days, the
case created a worldwide sensa-
tion, and all eyes were focused
on the relatively isolated
island of Tasmania. The investi-
gators were quite unprepared
for the resulting publicity--and
neither, it seems, was the
Australian government.

By March 16, after questions
on the unidentifiability of the
Globster had been raised in
Parliament, the government moved

fast. A new team -- excluding
Mollison -- was put together,
setting off from Hobart by air
for northwestern Tasmania, where
helicopters were rented. The
team was thus able to land right
at the site.

John H. Calaby, senior mam-
malogist at the CSIRO Wildlife
Division, in Canberra, led the
expedition, which also included
A.M. Olsen, a senior research
officer at the CSIRO Fisheries
Division, Eric R. Guiler, a
University of Tasmania zoolo-
gist, best remembered today for
his 30-year search for the thyl-
acine (see Newsletter, Winter,
1985), and W. Bryden, director
of the Tasmanian Museum.

The team was back in Hobart
by the next day, March 18, and
immediately wrote a report,
which was submitted to Senator
John Gorton, Minister for the
Commonwealth of Australia, under
whose jurisdiction CSIRO fell.

The report, which was pub-
lished in Hobart's The Mercury
on March 19, read in part:
"When laid out flat, the mater-
ial was eight feet long, three
feet wide, and ten inches
thick.... It consists throughout
of tough, fibrous material
loaded with fatty or oily sub-
stances.... The material did not
contain any bones, spines, or
other hard structures.... The
hair-like material of the ex-
posed surfaces was merely a
consequence of desiccation and
leaching of fat-filled fibrous
material."

The report concluded that,
due to the length of time the
carcass had been stranded, "it
is not possible to specifically
identify it from our investiga-
tions so far. But our investi-
gations lead us to believe that
the so-called monster is a de-
composing portion of a large
marine animal. It is not inconsis-
tent with blubber.... Samples
have been taken for laboratory
comparison by appropriate
authorities."

That same day, Senator Gorton, who was later to become Prime Minister of Australia, read a terse statement to the press, essentially putting an end to the affair: "In layman's language, and allowing for scientific caution, this [report] means that your monster is a large lump of decomposing blubber, probably torn off a whale."

Jack Boote, the stockman who originally found the carcass, later stated: "They had to say it was nothing new to cover up the fact they hadn't done anything about it before.... They were too late and too slow. By the time they got there, the thing had decomposed. The thing I saw was not a whale or any part of a whale."

As to subsequent analyses of the samples, little is known. Sanderson, in one of his 1962 articles, quotes a Mr. Tracy, from CSIRO's Wheat Research Unit, who reportedly stated: "Our tests have established that the sample from the carcass is mainly protein.... This fitted in with other tests showing that the sample contained a lot of collagen..."

And what did Bruce Mollison--the first zoologist on the scene, who was excluded from the second, rushed investigation--make of it all? In a subsequent article (publication and date not known at this time), he gave his own views. First, we learn that a local fisherman had first mentioned the stranded carcass to a CSIRO officer, which is how Mollison learned of it. Mollison, who was about to leave CSIRO to become curator of mammals at the Tasmanian Museum, was the one who informed Cramp about the Globster, suggesting that he fund an investigation.

He went on to relate how, when he first arrived at the scene, he observed "...five gill-like, hairless slits on each side of the front. There were also four large hanging lobes in front, with a smooth

gulletlike orifice between the center pair. The rim of the hind part of the creature had many cushiony flanges, each carrying a single row of sharp, pencil-like spines. There was no sign of eyes or other organs.... The more I looked, the more I was convinced that it conformed to no known animal."

Mollison continued: "I hacked into the ivory-colored flesh with a hunting knife, but it was far too tough to get out a decent chunk. It was like thick leather." After returning to Hobart with the rest of the team, and some samples, Mollison returned once again to the site to obtain larger samples for his CSIRO colleagues who were to carry out analyses. This happened shortly before the "official" investigation on the 17th.

"I chopped into it this time with a sharp axe," he wrote, "slicing two-foot chunks from the hump. I had a cameraman with me and he took hundreds of feet of film to prove that 'the thing' really existed." By the time he returned to Hobart this second time, "with several large pieces of monster meat wrapped in plastic," the "monster hysteria" was well under way. News-men were arriving from Melbourne and Sydney, and "experts" around the world were pontificating as to what the Globster was.

Even at home, speculation was rampant, with Professor A.M. Clark, a zoologist at the University of Tasmania, proposing that the animal may have been a "giant ray." He was also quoted as stating that "it was clearly not a whale." The samples Mollison had taken back, meanwhile, "could not be identified." Mollison did not state what kinds of analyses were conducted, but he said none of the CSIRO scientists consulted "could agree on what it was."

None, that is, until the 24-hour "official" investigation of the 17th, which resulted in a cautionary suggestion that the

Globster might be a "decomposing portion of a large marine mammal," and Minister Gorton's immediate conclusion that that, in fact, is what it was.

Mollison concluded that the Globster he inspected "wasn't fish, fowl, or fruit. It wasn't a whale, seal, sea elephant, or squid," and that "we don't really know for sure what the creature was -- and we may never know."

The Tasmanian Globster was soon forgotten, but 6 years later another one was found, this time in New Zealand. The new Globster appeared on Muriwai Beach, on eastern North Island, in March of 1968. It was discovered by a Marine Department officer, and described as being 30 feet long, and 8 feet high. The carcass, again, was reported as "hairy." Professor J.E. Morton, chairman of the Zoology Department at the University of Auckland, was quoted by the press as stating: "I can't think of anything it resembles."

Unfortunately, no further details as to the investigation, conclusions, or final disposition of the New Zealand Globster, or samples from it, are available at this time.

However, history was to repeat itself in Tasmania, with the beaching of yet a third Globster in 1970. It was found a few miles south of Sandy Cape, in western Tasmania, by Ben Fenton, the same landowner as in the 1960 find. Fenton still bristled remembering the events of a decade earlier. "Be darn careful what you say, and be careful you don't quote me as saying it is a monster," he told Kerry Pink, of The Advocate, published in Burnie, which ran an article on the new find on November 12, 1970.

"I don't know what it is, and I'm making no guesses--not after the last lot," Fenton told Pink by phone. "All I can say is that it wasn't there when we were



The New Zealand Globster, discovered in 1968. Details of the investigation and conclusions are not known.

down that way about 7 weeks ago." He described it as being about 8 feet long, "humped," and with a tough, leather-like hide. "That's what is showing above the sand," he said. "I've got no idea what the rest of it buried in the sand is like, and I don't intend to try and find out.... Somebody else can do that if they want to. This is a comparatively fresh specimen of whatever it is, and probably could still be identified with certainty."



A close-up of the New Zealand Globster. Note "hairiness" or "stringiness."

As with the New Zealand Globster, no further information is available at this time as to what investigation, if any, was carried out, and what the results were.

Reviewing these Australasian Globster beachings demonstrates that the new Bermuda Blob is not an isolated case. Furthermore, the descriptions--and photos--are similar in all cases. All the carcasses were described as tough and hard to cut, usually odorless, and very "stringy," which is often called "hairy." And, curiously, all seem to be more or less unidentifiable by experts.

A number of questions can now be addressed. First, can it be determined if the three Australasian Globsters (or at least the first two, for which there are photos) involved the same kind of animal? If so, can it be determined if the new Bermuda Blob also involves the same kind of animal? Can any of these, or all of them, be identified as remains from a giant octopus (in at least one case, collagen was mentioned). And, finally, can any of this relate to the 1896

Florida carcass, which many think was of a giant octopus, and which contained a lot of collagen?

These are difficult questions to answer, as are most questions in cryptozoology. But they make the Bermuda Blob and its available samples potentially important. Also, it may still be possible to obtain copies of the original Tasmanian analyses, photos, and perhaps even preserved tissue samples, which might remain buried somewhere in CSIRO to this day. Dr. Roper, who works with cephalopod specialists at CSIRO, will pursue this avenue, and inquiries will also be made as to the whereabouts of Mollison, if he still lives.

If some of the Tasmanian tissue could be analyzed by modern-day techniques which were not available in 1962, it might demonstrate that the Globster was not, after all, whale blubber. After nearly three decades, it is hoped that the circumstances prevailing at the time, which politically might have brought a rapid end to a nettlesome case regardless of the scientific questions involved, are now nonexistent. This could make a re-examination of the evidence possible.

In the meantime, working through the Smithsonian Institution, the Society hopes to at least get to the bottom of the Bermuda Blob, which also, so far, remains unidentified. □

"It is a mistake to believe that a science consists in nothing but conclusively proven propositions, and it is unjust to demand that it should. It is a demand only made by those who feel a craving for authority in some form and a need to replace the religious catechism by something else, even if it be a scientific one."

Sigmund Freud
Austrian psychoanalyst

SOVIETS FORM CRYPTOZOOLOGY SOCIETY

The Association of Cryptozoologists is the official name of a new group in the Soviet Union with close links to ISC. Its creation was made possible by the increasing social liberalization in that country brought about by Mikhail Gorbachev's programs of glasnost and perestroika.

After some discussion among members of the long-existing Relict Hominoid Research Seminar (sponsored by the Darwin Museum and of which ISC Board member Dmitri Bayanov is chairman), Marie-Jeanne Koffmann, an Honorary Member of ISC, undertook the task of legally establishing the Association, no small task even under liberalized conditions.

In a letter to the ISC Secretariat, Bayanov stated: "A great many hurdles had to be overcome, and many a time it seemed we would not be able to pull it off, but finally we did succeed.... It is fair to say that the existence of our Association is due to Dr. Koffmann's initiative, persistence, and energy."

One hurdle which was almost not overcome was ministerial displeasure over a newspaper report. Soon after the legal establishment of the Association and its official registration by the appropriate authorities, a journalist happened to mention that it fell under the jurisdiction of the Ministry of Culture. The Minister, upon reading the article in the newspaper, was shocked to find that, not only was he responsible for the Bolshoi Ballet and the Moscow Symphony Orchestra, but also for the likes of the Abominable Snowman and other such creatures!

Numerous telephonic and written exchanges between the Ministry and one of its dependencies, the Darwin Museum (under which

both the Seminar and the new Association fall), finally resolved the tempest.

Bayanov credits this success to Museum Director Svetlana Kuleshova, who, although a "disbeliever" of cryptozoological claims, defended the new Association in her exchanges with the Ministry, as well as with noted academics who form the Museum's own Scientific Council, some of whom were not at all happy with the cryptozoology link and had actually threatened to resign from the Council. A compromise was finally reached when the Council was assured it would not be associated with any cryptozoological activities.

The old Relict Hominoid Research Seminar, of which Dmitri Bayanov is still chairman, now operates under the auspices of the new Association, both falling under the umbrella of the Darwin Museum, and, ultimately, the Ministry of Culture.

Article I of the Association's constitution states that it is "a voluntary scientific public organization of USSR citizens engaged in research to promote the development of a new zoological discipline, cryptozoology, devoted to the search for animals unknown to science or believed to be extinct." Another article speaks of "the search on USSR territory for undescribed animal species, also species believed to be extinct, as well as known species unregistered in a given region, i.e., species embraced by the notion of cryptozoology."

The new Soviet group thus follows the philosophy of ISC quite closely. One exception is perhaps a non-killing policy. By a decision of the board, all applicants for membership must state in writing that they will not use any methods that may endanger the life of a relict

hominoid or wildman. The ISC Board, on the other hand, drafted a policy statement some years ago which removes the Society from any such ethical or legal questions (see Newsletter, Autumn, 1984, p. 9).

The Association currently has about 50 members (the annual membership fee is 12 rubles), 14 of whom serve on the Board of Directors. The chairperson of the board is Dr. Koffmann, who fought to create the Association while gravely ill and was incapacitated during the first 6 months of its existence. Dr. Koffmann is a medical doctor, war hero, mountaineer, and a long-time investigator of the reported Caucasus wildman (see the interview with her in the Summer, 1988, Newsletter).

In a formal letter to the ISC Secretariat, Dr. Koffmann recently provided more details of the Association's interests. Although most members still concentrate on hominology (the Soviet term for the study of unknown hominoids or hominids), increasing interest is being paid to reports of other possible animals unknown to science in the Soviet Union's vast territories. This has been partly stimulated by the availability of information provided through ISC publications over the past 7 years.

Dr. Koffmann specifically mentioned a strange snake in the Caucasus she herself is searching for, giant snakes in Soviet Asia, reports of Asian cheetahs (Acinonyx jubatus venaticus) on the eastern shore of the Caspian Sea (cheetahs are believed extinct in the Soviet Union), and large "lizards" in various swamps at different latitudes. Further information on these cryptids will be submitted to ISC's publications in the future.

Some members of the new Association are in Leningrad. This group is headed by Vladimir Sapunov, a biostatistician at Leningrad State University (see his research report in Vol. 7 of Cryptozoology). Sapunov reports to the ISC Secretariat that one early project is an analysis of the Patterson-Gimlin Sasquatch film by experts at the State Optical Institute. Another is his own research on mathematical modeling of the probability of detection of rare animals, and

he and his colleagues are working on applying this model to cryptozoological search strategies.

A close and cooperative relationship between ISC and the new Soviet Association of Cryptozoologists is expected, and the Editor would like to take this opportunity, on behalf of all ISC members, to extend to them the best wishes of the International Society of Cryptozoology. □

SASQUATCH SYMPOSIUM

As announced previously, the Eighth Annual Membership Meeting of the Society will be dedicated to a symposium on the subject of Sasquatch (Bigfoot) and other unverified hominids or hominoids.

The Meeting will be held on June 24-25, 1989, at Washington State University, in Pullman, hosted by the Department of Anthropology. The symposium is being organized by Grover Krantz, a physical anthropologist at WSU, Vladimir Markotic, an archaeologist at the University of Calgary, and ISC Secretary Richard Greenwell. Krantz, who will also chair the meeting but will not be a formal speaker, is the leading proponent in the scientific community that Sasquatch evidence is generated by a real animal. He serves on the Society's Board of Directors.

The symposium is considered by some as a followup to a conference held in May, 1978, sponsored by the Museum of Anthropology at the University of British Columbia, entitled "Sasquatch and Similar Phenomena." The timing of the new symposium, which is entitled "Sasquatch Evidence: Scientific and Social Implications," coincides with the centennial of Washington State, where the legislature has adopted Harrison Bigfoot as the Official State Animal for 1989.

The new symposium is expected to attract most of the Bigfoot community. With few scientists working on the Sasquatch problem, most of the speakers have also been drawn from the active Bigfoot community.

After welcoming remarks from Anthropology Department chairman Geoffrey Gamble, Canadian investigator and author John Green, considered the leading authority on the subject, will give an introductory presentation reviewing the history of Sasquatch reports and studies.

Other speakers will be Ohio State University physical anthropologist Frank Poirier, California investigator Danny Perez, Florida investigator Bruce Davis, Oregon investigator Jack Lapseritis, Walla Walla Sasquatch witness Paul Freeman, Oregon investigator James Hewkin, WSU anthropology graduate student Lonnie Somer, Alberta investigator Thomas Steenburg, Ohio investigator Mark Francis, Maryland anthropologist Pennington Smith, Wisconsin herpetologist Terry Cullen (who is to talk on the famous Minnesota Iceman case), and Markotic.

In addition, Canadian Robert Hutchison will travel from Switzerland to talk on his search for the Himalayan Yeti, and Soviet investigators Dmitri Bayanov and Igor Bourtsev are also making the necessary

arrangements to attend the meeting and present papers on their ongoing work in the Soviet Union.

At the end of the two-day symposium, a panel discussion will address the topic: "What Would Happen if Definite Evidence is Found?" Panel members are still being selected.

The Society is not making any hotel or meal arrangements. However, as a courtesy, a regional mailing is going out to all members in a seven-state, three-province area with names and telephone numbers of Pullman motels, and a map. This mailing will also contain the final symposium program. □

APOLOGY

Unfortunately, the Society's new computer behaved very erratically during its first 6 months of operation, often losing text. Several corrective measures were taken following instructions from factory service engineers, all to no avail. The computer was finally shipped back to the factory in Pennsylvania, and, after 2 months, the Society has received it back with new interior hardware. It is now behaving perfectly.

The computer was still under warranty, so there has been no added expense to the Society. However, our traditionally late newsletters have been delayed even further. Our job now is to catch up, and that we intend to do. Thank you for your patience and understanding. -- Editor.

"I find comfort in the thought that the creative mind fashions the world in which we live. For it means that the mind and reality are more profound than we normally suppose."

Edward Harrison
 "The Uncertainty of Knowledge"
 New Scientist
 September 24, 1987

MESSAGE FROM THE EDITOR

One afternoon some months ago, I was doing bibliographic work in the Science Library at the University of Arizona. The collection comprising zoology is quite extensive, as one would expect in any large university research library--in fact, several years ago, Arizona was ranked as having the 17th best research library in the nation.

One of the problems with doing bibliographic work in such environs is that of getting sidetracked, as one continually encounters interesting books, monographs, journals, etc. which either one has not noticed before or are new in the collection. A 20-minute search-and-copy mission can thus become a 2-hour perusal through other literature which, although extremely interesting--and worth copying for future reference--is of absolutely no relevance to the mission at hand.

Such were my frustrations on the particular afternoon in question. I was locating and copying papers on monitor lizards--and being continually distracted by other zoological topics and titles. It happened as I was walking briskly in search of my next call number. My eyes suddenly transmitted a strange message to my brain: the word "cryptozoology." By the time my perceptual system absorbed it and my higher cognitive system pondered it, my legs had taken two or three additional steps.

My cognitive system must have taken the matter quite seriously, for I found myself taking a few steps backwards. There it was; there was no doubt about it: a large, two-inch thick volume bearing the name "CRYPTOZOLOGY," just sitting on the shelf as it if owned it.

What could this possibly be, I wondered? Could it be that

some new book on cryptozoology had been published without my knowledge? That was impossible, I thought: how could a book be written, published, and placed in the libraries without me, the Society's Editor of Publications, even having heard about it?

No, I thought, it must be some old tome, one we somehow all had missed in our bibliographic searches.... No, that didn't seem possible either. Bernard Heuvelmans, who had coined the term "cryptozoology" 30 years before, had never referenced such a book in his own recent bibliographic works.

I very cautiously raised my arm and lifted the volume off the shelf to inspect this usurper. As I opened the cover, a streak of recognition flashed to my brain. I was looking at our own journal, Cryptozoology, the first several issues of which had been bound together into a nice hardcloth cover by the Library. I had never seen Cryptozoology in this bound format before--although it must now exist in this form in numerous libraries--and it took me completely by surprise.

Monitor lizards were, of course, completely forgotten for a while, and I sat at one of the nearby study tables to inspect my new find. Familiar titles and names jumped out at me: Zhou's 1982 article on the Chinese Wildman, Roy Wagner's first article on the Ri, Heuvelmans' article on how many species remain to be discovered, Agnagna's field report on his sighting of Mokele-Mbembe, Bob Downing's article on the supposed Eastern cougars, and all the many book reviews and comments and responses.

As I sat there glancing through the pages, all of which at one time or another had

undergone my intense editorial scrutiny, a strange feeling came over me. Men and women will come and go, controversies will erupt and die off, cases will receive fame and then disappear, and, yes, even nations and empires will rise and fall, and through it all this journal will survive. So long as there is a library, a university, a State of Arizona, a civilization on the planet, this little bound volume will just sit there on the shelf--sometimes, no doubt, gathering dust--for posterity.

If nothing else, then, we, as a Society, have already made our contribution to posterity, and the fruits of our labor will always be there for future scholars to see, to use, to ridicule, or to cherish, however they see fit.

I don't usually feel such a quiet sense of accomplishment as I felt that afternoon. It is a sense of accomplishment I want to share with our hundreds of members all over the world; not just with those who labored writing the damn stuff, or refereeing it, but also with those who simply read it, and in the process broadened their own minds a bit, and also, in so doing, added their little part--and sometimes not so little--to make it all financially possible. To all of you, thank you.

I did eventually locate all those monitor lizard papers I was looking for that afternoon, but, as I recall, I was very late for dinner.

J. Richard Greenwell
Editor

"Few people are capable of expressing with equanimity opinions which differ from the prejudices of their social environment. Most people are even incapable of forming such opinions."

Albert Einstein
German theoretical physicist

SOCIETY FOR SCIENTIFIC EXPLORATION

The year 1982 saw the birth of two unusual societies, the International Society of Cryptozoology (ISC) and the Society for Scientific Exploration (SSE), the latter under the presidency of Peter A. Sturrock, an astrophysicist at Stanford University.

While ISC has been strictly concerned with cryptozoology and its related fields, SSE has had much broader interests: that is, practically anything of scientific interest which remains, for whatever reasons, outside the mainstream of scientific investigation or discussion. SSE members tend to be more interested in the physical and psychological sciences, which makes it complementary with ISC, which is more concerned with the biological sciences.

Thus, most research and publication by SSE members has

related to parapsychology, the study of UFO reports, and other, even more esoteric fields. Generally, such studies have followed standard scientific procedures despite the controversial nature of the subjects involved.

Unlike ISC, membership in SSE has been tightly controlled, requiring high academic qualifications and professional endorsements.

Two things have happened recently of possible interest to ISC members. First, after several years of planning and preparation, SSE has begun publication of its Journal of Scientific Exploration (the Society has also published 10 issues of its newsletter, The Explorer). The new journal, which began publication in 1987, appears twice a year, and runs between 100 and 200 pages. As with ISC's jour-

nal Cryptozoology, major articles in the new SSE journal are refereed, and the publication is handsomely produced and marketed by Pergamon Press, a major publisher of scientific journals.

The other event of possible interest to readers is the creation of a new membership category within SSE to accommodate interested laypersons. The new category of Associate has been created for "any person who supports the goals of the Society and wishes to receive its publications."

The cost of becoming an SSE Associate is \$35 a year, and includes the receipt of both the semiannual journal and the occasional newsletter. Those interested should write to: Dr. Laurence Frederick, Department of Astronomy, University of Virginia, Box 3818, Charlottesville, Virginia 22903. □

CRYPTOLETTERS

The Editor welcomes letters from readers on any topic related to cryptozoology, but reserves the right to shorten them or to make slight changes to improve style and clarity, but not meaning.

To the Editor:

Further to the moving tributes to Tim Dinsdale in the spring newsletter, I would like to give my own perspective of Dinsdale the Nessie hunter and Dinsdale the man.

Tim Dinsdale was certainly the most unremitting searcher for definitive proof of the existence of the Loch Ness Monster. He made no fewer than 56 separate expeditions to the loch, keeping watch from land and boat. Over a period of almost 30 years, he spent a

total of more than 580 days on the waters of Loch Ness.

It all began in 1959, when he became intrigued by something he had read about sightings in the loch. Characteristically, he decided to see for himself; remarkably, he succeeded--his very first expedition yielded the famous 1960 film. And thus began his long quest.

Because of the qualities he brought to that quest, Tim Dinsdale became an example and an inspiration to many. Notably, he accepted responsibility. He didn't exhort others to do what he thought needed doing; he set about doing it himself.

In his personal life, too, Tim accepted responsibility. He was a friend in need to relatives and acquaintances on a number of occasions, and he was devoted to his family--his wife Wendy, daughters Dawn and Alex-

andra, and sons Simon and Angus. His family reciprocated, and fully supported Tim's quest; they are resolved that the records of his work shall be carefully preserved.

Tim kept his curiosity and his willingness to learn throughout his life. He was interested in many other things besides Loch Ness. For many years he had expressed the hope that the matter would be settled so that he could turn his energies elsewhere. Thus, and again notably, he worked at Loch Ness not because he sought to make a career or a name for himself out of it.

He also kept himself remarkably and totally out of the polemics that have been such a regrettable part of the Loch Ness story. One can scan his writings, and the records of his many talks and interviews, without finding a hint of self-

aggrandisement or denigration of others.

There is no doubt that Tim must have seen the seamy side of the human character: people who wanted to exploit him and his work and assume the credit that was rightly his, people who pursued public acclamation--usually unwarranted, occasionally quite fraudulent--but who had abandoned their own ideals. He was saddest, perhaps, over the dissonance between the sincerity of humanity's quest for knowledge and the fallible practices by which humans carry out the quest, the dissonance between the ideals of science and the practice of scientists.

He never lost his own ideals, however, and he never became cynical or bitter. Rather, he remained to the end perhaps a little naive about people. He believed and trusted readily, as though dishonesty and untrustworthiness were so rare as not to be anticipated. No doubt he, as do most of us, unconsciously judged others by himself, and he was indeed himself the soul of integrity and trustworthiness.

Tim took his task seriously, but never himself. So often would he exclaim, in his very British way: "Isn't it all fun?" --as he recounted perhaps some silliness on his part in his boat that could have been dangerous, or some silliness on somebody else's part.

Tim Dinsdale was a profoundly good influence on many of us. It is sad he could not live to see his Nessie finally revealed; but it is nice that he heard of the high regard we all had for him, verbalized in the moving words of Roy Mackal in Edinburgh in July, 1987, on the occasion of Tim's election as an Honorary Member of the Society.

Henry H. Bauer
Department of Chemistry
Virginia Polytechnic Institute
and State University
Blacksburg, Virginia, U.S.A.

To the Editor:

I have located, in the state of Durango, Mexico, what appears to be the southernmost population of black bear in North America. This very small, very threatened population survives in a wilderness area of the Eastern Sierra Madre mountain range.

This area, never visited by outsiders, consists of a montane pine forest divided by a deep river valley. This valley is an extremely rugged area of canyons and ravines, making travel very difficult.

Besides black bear, there is the possibility of the Mexican grey wolf surviving there. According to my local informants, there are also populations of two different kinds of lion in the region: leon pardo, the common mountain lion or puma, and leon onza. Leon onza reportedly differs from leon pardo in being more lightly built, but taller, and it is said to be more aggressive.

I am presently seeking funding for fieldwork in this area. Anybody interested in sponsoring or participating in a survey of this region may contact me through the ISC Secretariat.

Roger Otto
Pierce, Nebraska, U.S.A.

To the Editor:

After learning of your organization and its challenging mandate, I am offering some information that may be of use to those interested in the Sasquatch problem.

About 6 years ago, I met a gentleman who much impressed me by both his veracity and reliability--he was an actuarial administrator--and by the startling revelation that his son had been present at a Sasquatch sighting in Nova Scotia, Canada.

While on Army maneuvers in that province, his son and fellow soldiers had heard the sounds of a large animal moving through the bush, and they had also noticed the musty smell which allegedly characterizes sites frequented by this animal.

Although his son did not see the Sasquatch, several other soldiers reportedly did. His son also reported that roadblocks were rapidly erected and men were brought in from the maneuvers to be debriefed and charged with secrecy. Clearly, many of them did not see this as a matter of defense importance, and news of the event leaked to family and friends.

We could have here one of two situations: a) an event which could be detailed somewhere in official Canadian Armed Forces records, and therefore available through public inquiry, or b) a sociopsychological experiment in secrecy, in which behavioral reaction would unwittingly become part of the data to be harvested.

Phil Lange
Department of Anthropology
McMaster University
Hamilton, Ontario, Canada

To the Editor:

Although I only recently joined the Society, I have had an intense interest in cryptozoology since long before I had ever heard of the term.

I have just completed Roy Mackal's book on the Congo expeditions in search of Mokele-Mbembe. The book was, to the say the least, fascinating. I hold a Ph.D. in bioengineering, and I am pleased to say that your free thinking, boldness with caution, and sound reasoning epitomize all that is good in science.

William S. Pietrzak
Zionsville, Indiana, U.S.A.

WOOD'S ANIMAL FACTS

The largest known octopus among more than 100 living species is Octopus apollyon (=O. dofleini) of the coastal waters of the North Pacific, which regularly exceeds 12ft (3.7m) in radial spread and 55lb (25kg) in weight.

One huge individual trapped in a fisherman's net in Monterey Bay, California, had a radial spread of over 20ft (6.1m), and scaled 110lb (50kg), but this size was exceeded by another giant octopus which scuba diver Donald E. Hagen "wrestled" to the surface single-handed in Lower Hoods Canal, Puget Sound, Washington, on February 18, 1973. This monster measured 12ft 8.5in (3.87m) overall--several lengths were actually obtained, ranging from 11ft 8in (3.56m) to 13ft 3in (4.04m)--and had a relaxed radial spread of 23ft (7m) (the arms of this species

account for about 78 per cent of the total length).

Another huge individual caught off Dungeness, Washington, reportedly weighed 125lb (57kg), but further details are lacking.

Jerry Brown of Seattle, Washington, told Jacques Yves Cousteau (1973) that the largest octopus he had ever seen had a radial spread of over 30ft (9.1m), and probably weighed over 200lb (91kg), while Bernard Heuvelmans credits this species with measurements up to 32ft (9.85m) across ("some say 39ft"), and a weight of 275lb (125kg).

Some of the South Pacific octopods found on the coral reefs off Port de Papeari, Tahiti, also reach a large size. Wilmon Menard (1947) was present

on the Rimaroa atoll when one spanning 18ft (5.5m) was killed by the local male population with clubs and spears, and this was not considered a record specimen.

In 1874, Dr. William H. Dall, the curator of mollusks at the U.S. National Museum, in Washington, D.C., speared an octopus of the North Pacific variety Octopus hongkongensis in Illiuliuk Harbor, Unalaska Island, Alaska, which had a radial spread of 32ft (9.8m), but the body of this cephalopod was diminutive by comparison--12x6in (305x152mm)--and the creature probably weighed no more than 20lb (9.1kg).

Abstracted from:

The Guinness Book of Animal Facts and Feats, by Gerald L. Wood, Guinness Superlatives, Enfield, U.K. (3rd ed.), 1982.

Honorary Members: Andre Capart (Belgium); Marjorie Courtenay-Latimer (South Africa); John Green (Canada); The Lord Hunt of Llanfair Waterdine (U.K.); Marie-Jeanne Koffmann (U.S.S.R.); Ingo Krumbiegel (Federal German Republic); Theodore Monod (France); Sir Peter Scott (U.K.); Robert Titmus (Canada).

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